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modesty is in little danger of miscomprehension, and the mistakes of innocence charm a world which hastens to condemn the suggestions of prudery.

Amélie Rives says of the young woman possessed of worldly knowledge: "Her brothers will confide in her as they never would were she the morally one-sided being instanced as the only type of the refined and innocent maiden." But although the knowledge of the day forces us to cast off mediæval conceptions of woman, does not the fact remain that a sister's innocent horror of evil is a more effective restraint on her brother than a knowledge which would place her on a level with his boyish comrades, and does not the necessity of its concealment from her eyes blacken to him the shadow of the evil? Is it the woman who knows the evil in a man's life who influences him, or the woman who recognizes the ideal towards which he strives?

In urging that any child may develop the evil tendencies which have never appeared in the parent, and should be taught accordingly, the writer quotes from the "Origin of Species," instancing a case of avatism—the occasional appearance of a moss rose on a common rose plant. Herein she establishes the possibility of exception to a general rule, but the fact that a girl of 'horrid tendencies' may come from an unexceptionable family offers no argument for all girls being taught what would be harmful, except to some chance abnormal individual, and had Darwin spoken of the cultivation of the moss rose on the plant of the common rose, would he not have advocated that care of all the buds which would develop the finest specimen?

If, as Sir William Hamilton says, a presentation or representation tends to exclude its opposite from consciousness, the old theory that a young girl be kept ignorant of the wickedness of the world is based on a psychological fact.

BERTHA MONROE RICKOFF.

#### THE MIGRATIONS OF THE BRAHMAN.

A CERTAIN professor of theology in Tübingen warmly censured the holding of extreme views upon any religious subject. "Some persons," he told his classes, "assert with positiveness that there is a God. Others deny his existence *in toto*. Gentlemen, your safest course will be between these two opinions." In the case of the Hindu philosophy, as variously expounded in this country, we can certainly say, *medio tutissimus ibis*.

There are invasions of ideas as of armies. Those of Eastern philosophy and poetry in the West, though they are but "deeply, darkly understood," have yet had a considerable following among us. The interest of the English-reading public in Oriental thought, whether Buddhist or Brahman, is not indeed a new thing; Sir Charles Wilkins's translation of the Bhagavat-Gita, a portion of the Mahabharata, having been published in London in 1785. It was the first fragment of Hindu philosophy that was adequately presented to English readers.

The Bhagavat-Gita is the typical expression of ancient Hindu ethics and philosophy, and is still the best known in Europe and in America of the Hindu scriptures. It is a work of profound intrinsic interest, which is not lessened whether we read it in the temper of the earlier or of the latest English commentators. Yet not until recent years has any considerable impression been made in England or America by Hindu philosophy, poetry or religion. These have appealed indeed to the thought and sympathy of scholars of both countries from Wilkins and Sir William Jones to Whitney,

Müller and others of the present day. But the British public in general received the successive instalments of translation with a merely curious interest, relegating them for the most part to the limbo of elegant extracts nor was it until lately that Eastern literature can be said to have won any popularity in England.

In our own country, on the other hand, these writings have been the main inspiring force in what still remains the nearest approach to original poetic thought that we have as yet produced—the Concord philosophy of the time of the “Dial,” especially as represented in the writings of Emerson.

Through the medium of this brooding spirit Oriental thought came to exercise, for some thirty years, a profound influence upon the development of the New England mind; let us say upon the generation that received its culture during the years from 1835 to 1865. That influence was not intellectually virile; it unnerved the life and unstrung the thought of many; yet it cheered many a gentle spirit and softened some rugged ones. Where it sought to instruct the intellect it failed, as all poetry must fail. But where it was taken for poetry, which it is, and not for philosophy, which it is not, it well served the legitimate purposes of poetry,—to cultivate and to refine the emotions. Both for better and for worse, this Western Orientalism has been a real influence in our New England culture, and through this upon the cultivated mind of the entire country.

The second American invasion of the Brahman was a very different affair.—Ahriman pursuing Ormuzd, if I may use a dignified comparison in a matter of pure fraud. The “occult sciences,” as exploited by the late lamented Madame Blavatsky, gathered themselves together, like nebulous matter from space, in the concrete domain of a New York avenue; and there, for a time, they clung to every-day life like a corposant to the weather gearing of a topsail-yard in a storm. It was with but a precarious tenacity. During the years 1875-1876 much was heard of the “materializations” and other mystic doings of these people; but finally they departed like the enchanter’s rout in Comus, taking their astral bodies and their double-acting shrines to India. Thither, in November, 1884, they were followed by a member of the British Society for Psychical Research, Mr. Hodgson, who was charged with the duty of investigating their claims; and these he found and declared to be entirely fraudulent.

These people had no serious following in the United States; but they left a glimmering trail of curiosity behind them. The familiar stories of the Indian jugglers and of their marvels obtained new currency; a Brahman visited us occasionally, and stirred up new interest in the slowly-growing circle of ingenuous thinkers who hoped to find answers to their anxious questions in alien creeds. Some of these were honest and competent thinkers; some were neither honest nor competent. A Mr. Chatterji, who is said to have been one of Madame Blavatsky’s dupes, was one of these missionaries. He had vogue in Boston. He translated the Bhagavat-Gita under the title of “The Lord’s Day,” and provided it with Scriptural and other notes intended to adapt what Warren Hastings called the “obscurity, absurdity and perverted morality” of the text to the readier acceptance of the New England Calvinist.

Meanwhile, both at home and abroad, many translations and adaptations of Eastern works have provided a tenfold fuller opportunity for students than that which the enthusiasts of the “Dial” period had ever enjoyed; and the success of Sir Edwin Arnold’s poems gave a perceptible impulse,

both in England and in the United States, to the popularization of Eastern thought. Eastern religious writings, after many centuries of service among Eastern followers more numerous than those of Christianity, are now finding a new audience among us, and are attracting the interest of many readers who are tired of the "creeds outworn" in which they have sought in vain for answers to their questionings.

And what is the nature of the messages that the Hindus may have for us of the West? Our first Oriental scholar, Professor Whitney, describes them as an "immense body of literary records which extends itself over the whole religious and philosophical history of the Hindu people." Their general history, more or less mythical, is also given in these writings with the greatest fulness. The Mahabharata, for instance, contain a hundred thousand slokas, or 220,000 lines—more than seven times the length of the Iliad and Odyssey together. On this ample scroll is written the story, real and supernatural, of the wars between the Kauravas and the sons of Pandu, whom the former had expelled by fraud from the throne of northern India. The work is cast in consistent epic form, though burdened with interminable and repetitious episodes; and whether we consider the range, imagination or power of this work we must regard it as an epic poem of the first order, though it appeals to different standards of taste from our own. It is now for the first time becoming accessible as a whole to Western readers. Chandra Roy, of Calcutta, a Brahman and a scholar, and secretary of the Bharata press, has devoted his private fortune to making a translation of the Mahabharata into English prose. The work is now approaching completion, seventy-seven parts out of ninety having been published by subscription, and it is to be hoped that this great task will not fail through lack of support by the public. No complete translation of the poem has yet appeared in any European language. In Calcutta, too, another learned Pandit, Chandra Kaviratna, has begun an English translation of the Charaka-Sanbata, an ancient and interesting treatise on Hindu medicine.

Not a hundredth part, however, of the titles of the Hindu writings are known even by name to the Western public; but those that are accessible to us will enable us to estimate with some accuracy the significance to us of this great body of literature. What, in the main, is that significance? What is the value of the Hindu ethics, poetry, philosophy, religion, "for the study of the spiritually-minded," to use Mr. Chatterji's unctuous phrase of commendation?

The answer to the question has already been indicated. Whether as poetry, history, mythology or philosophy, they have an abundant human and an abundant mythic interest. Even as ethics these documents have interest, though in a way quite different from that which many of their most zealous students have supposed. In their freshness they have a distinctive value for the Western reader. The truths that pall on the student of our own more familiar Scriptures are vitalized anew in the Hindu guise, even though that be the older garment of the two in point of time. What new impulses we receive from Marcus Aurelius, from Confucius, from the writings of the Stoics! In like manner the Vedas are of great value by their power to freshen blunted ethical impressions.

But to those who have sought in serious faith for more than this in the books of the old Scriptures, who desire a substantial revelation, and not merely different forms of statement, ethical or religious, all this will be but a poor commendation of the Vedas. It is pathetic to see the Western student

approach these alien scriptures in the hope that there he may discover some better way among the creeds. He will find no new guidance there. It needs to be said with the utmost clearness that the Hindu scriptures do not point out any new path of knowledge, whether as to things spiritual or in the domain of mental science. On the contrary, for the most part, they are utterly crude on the intellectual side, and they point the student directly away from knowledge, except such as all studies of origin give by aiding us to forecast the future possibilities of thought. It is from no star of the East, or of the West, that the light of intellectual progress comes; it is from the forward-shining sun.

But these considerations do not detract from the legitimate value of the Hindu writings, neither those of Brahmanism nor of Buddhism. They have the most interesting human traits,—all the more interesting for their strangeness and remoteness. Even to a “seeker of spiritual light” they may have a very distinct value if they teach him that the so-called wisdom of the ancients is in intellectual matters the thought of children and the passion of youth, not the matured wisdom of the race’s prime. As regards human knowledge, the old times were young times. The old poets knew life, and wrote wisely of it. But in philosophy, ethics, religion, the “wisdom of the ancients” is in the main part untenable; it is in the main the record of great natural powers beating the air in vain for lack of facts to work on. *Chimæra bombinans in vacuo* must be inscribed upon all the ancient systems—and *chimæra bombinans in vacuo* upon all the modern systems that are not based upon the patient, intelligent, and trained investigation of nature. The coming of the Brahman shall not have been in vain if it shall teach us to study the past only that we may the better interrogate the present and the future.

TITUS MUNSON COAN.

### THE CANADIAN QUESTION.

A TRIAL of fourteen years of Protection has not convinced the average Canadian consumer that a high tariff on imports has made him prosperous. A few industries have been stimulated and a dozen manufacturers and sugar refiners have grown rich, but the lavish promises of the doctrinaires have not been fulfilled. The cost of living has increased, while incomes have not materially advanced. The McKinley Bill has not quelled the uneasy feeling, though, to the credit of the Canadians it must be said, they accepted the situation courageously and sought new markets for products affected by the unfriendly measure. Many eyes turned to Washington early last year, and three Dominion ministers attempted to resume negotiations pointing to reciprocity; but they failed, because Canada wanted restricted reciprocity, while the United States insisted on a treaty covering broader lines. To this Canada could not consent, nor could she discriminate against British goods. Negotiations, consequently, were abruptly broken off. Since then a sharp debate has occurred in Parliament on resolutions affirming that Canada should have power to make her own commercial treaties. In this discussion Messrs. Mills and Laurier took the active part. For the Government the chief speaker was Mr. Foster, Minister of Finance. The debate proved interesting and developed much plain speaking, so far as Canada’s relationship to the mother country is concerned. Mr. Mills held that the colonial position was irksome, unsatisfactory, and unreasonable.

Mr. Laurier declared that there was not a Canadian, anywhere, who